

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1-20. (cancelled)

21. (currently amended) An expandable washer comprising:

a base of generally cylindrical shape;

a slide of generally cylindrical shape threadedly engaging the base to provide axial expansion of the washer during multiple revolutions of the slide with respect to the base in a first direction and axial contraction of the washer during multiple revolutions of the slide with respect to the base in a second direction, opposite the first direction, the base and slide providing a clearance hole extending axially therethrough; and

a coil spring having a first end engaging the base and a second end engaging the slide, the coil spring contained completely within the base and slide and loaded in torsion to urge relative rotation at least one revolution of the slide with respect to the base in the first direction.

22. (previously presented) The washer of claim 21, wherein the coil spring is formed of stainless steel.

23. (previously presented) The washer of claim 22, wherein the slide threadedly engages the base with multi-start threads.

24. (previously presented) The washer of claim 23, wherein the slide threadedly engages the base at a ramp angle of about five and a half degrees.

25. (previously presented) The washer of claim 23, further comprising a stop defining a maximum axial expansion to resist separation of the slide from the base.

26. (previously presented) The washer of claim 24, wherein the stop imposes a structural interference between the slide and the base to resist further relative rotation once a selected axial expansion of the washer is achieved.

27. (previously presented) The washer of claim 26, wherein the stop comprises a snapping ring applied to the slide to structurally interfere with the base once a selected axial expansion of the washer is achieved.

28. (previously presented) The washer of claim 26, further comprising a dry lubricant distributed along the threaded engagement between the base and slide.

29. (previously presented) The washer of claim 28, further comprising a selectively removable trigger resisting rotation of the slide with respect to the base.

30. (previously presented) The washer of claim 29, wherein the trigger comprises a removable screw extending radially through the slide to engage the base.

31. (previously presented) The washer of claim 21, wherein the slide threadedly engages the base with multi-start threads.

32. (previously presented) The washer of claim 21, wherein the slide threadedly engages the base at a ramp angle of about five and a half degrees.

33. (previously presented) The washer of claim 21, further comprising a stop imposing a structural interference between the slide and the base to resist further relative rotation once a selected axial expansion of the washer is achieved.

34. (previously presented) The washer of claim 21, further comprising a dry lubricant distributed along the threaded engagement between the base and slide.

35. (previously presented) The washer of claim 21, further comprising a trigger formed as a selectively removable screw extending radially through the slide to engage the base to resist rotation of the slide with respect to the base.

36. (currently amended) An expandable washer defining axial and diametral directions substantially orthogonal to one another, the washer comprising:

a base of generally cylindrical shape;

a slide of generally cylindrical shape having a width in the diametral direction;

the slide threadedly engaging the base to provide expansion of the washer in the axial direction during multiple revolutions of the slide with respect to the base about an axis extending in the axial direction, the base and slide providing a clearance hole extending in the axial direction therethrough;

a coil spring having a first end engaging the base and a second end engaging the slide, the coil spring loaded in torsion to urge relative rotation at least one revolution of the slide with respect to the base in a direction selected to produce expansion in the axial direction; and

the slide further sized in the diametral direction to extend the maximum width of the washer.

37. (currently amended) An expandable washer comprising:

a base;

a slide threadedly engaging the base to provide relative linear translation in an axial direction during ~~multiple revolutions of relative rotation~~, comprising at least one revolution, with respect to the base;

a bias member urging the relative rotation; and

the base, slide, and biasing member further defining an exterior envelope increasing in only an axial direction during the relative rotation.

38. (previously presented) The washer of claim 37, wherein the base and slide are formed with a clearance hole extending in the axial direction therethrough.

39. (previously presented) The washer of claim 37, wherein the biasing member is positioned within an exterior envelope formed by the base and slide.

40. (previously presented) The washer of claim 39, wherein the biasing member comprises a coil spring, loaded in torsion, having a first end engaging the base, and having a second end engaging the slide.